

WHAT IS FIRST AID?

First aid is the help given to someone who is injured or ill to keep them safe and to cause no further harm. The role of a first aider is to give someone this help.

THE FIRST AIMS OF FIRST AID ARE:

- Preserve life
- Prevent illness or injury from becoming worse
- Relieve pain, if possible
- Promote recovery
- Protect the unconscious

All information provided is from St John Ambulance in partnership with Sir Brian Bell Foundation Papua New Guinea

DEHYDRATION FROM ACUTE DIARRHOEA AND VOMITING

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Moderate to severe dry mouth, eyes and lips
- Sunken eyes
- Sunken fontanel in infants
- Irritability
- Watery stools
- Headache and feeling faint
- Passing only small amounts of dark urine

MANAGEMENT:

- 1. DRSABC**
(*Danger - Response - Send for help - Airway - Breathing - CPR*)
2. Provide the patient with clean, regular and adequate amounts of water
3. Promote breast milk feeding in infants under 6 months.
4. Oral re-hydration salts four times a day. If you don't have access to oral rehydration salts from the pharmacy, you can make yourself at home. A mix of sugar, salt, and water to replace salts and electrolytes that have been lost through diarrhoea. Combine:

- Method:**
- a. 6 level teaspoons of sugar.
 - b. 1/2 level teaspoon of salt.
 - c. 1 litre of boiled water. Cool the boiled water before drinking.

This makes 5 cups at 200ml each.

Adults drink up to four cups a day. Children drink up to 2 cups a day. Infants 5mls every 5 minutes until they wet a nappy. Continue regime whilst diarrhoea persists. Seek medical attention if there is blood in the faeces, runny stools ongoing for more than 24 hours, or the person is showing signs of dehydration.

If the patient can not keep down fluids and diarrhoea continues for longer than 24 hours in a child you need to seek medical help, or if concerned, call for an ambulance on 111.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

If many people in your village get sick at the same time you need to report it to your local health centre or the local health authority so they can investigate and fix the cause of infection.

COMMON CAUSES:

1. Infection:

Parasite through contaminated food or water.

Bacterial or **viral** through person to person contact or contact with a contaminated surface and not washing hands.

2. Malnutrition:

Children and immunocompromised adults can get diarrhoea as a result of malnutrition making them more malnourished. This cycle is a leading cause of death in some countries.

3. Other causes:

Might need a health worker to assess the patient.

PREVENTATIVE METHODS:

1. Practice good hand hygiene. Wash hands regularly.
2. Practice hygienic food preparation and storage habits.
3. Boil water and let it cool before drinking.
4. Cook food properly.